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ABSTRACT

Searching for additional bilingual-crosscultural teachers, the California State University (CSU) system plans to combine teacher education and the CSU International Programs approach. Basic elements of this program are: (1) intensive study of Spanish and immersion in a Spanish-speaking milieu; (2) a living experience in the Mexican culture; (3) a specific curriculum and program supporting a post-baccalaureate credential year with student teaching in Californian and Mexican schools; and (4) an alternate curriculum supporting the professional development needs of already credentialed teachers. Although this approach is not the entire solution to the shortage of qualified bilingual-crosscultural teachers, it is expected to provide a cadre of teachers able to offer special knowledge and assistance to school districts and professional colleagues. The development of the program is traced, and plans for its implementation, including program evaluation, are detailed. (SLD)

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AN INNOVATIVE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE PREPARATION OF BILINGUAL-CROSSCULTURAL TEACHERS

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AN INNOVATIVE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE PREPARATION OF BILINGUAL-CROSSCULTURAL TEACHERS

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There is a widening gap between the cultural experience of teachers and the cultural experience of the students they teach. It is this gap that is at the root of the problems described by teachers, administrators, parents and students in dealing with the cultural diversity in the present day California elementary classroom.

Putting this gap into quantifiable terms indicates the seriousness and urgency of the situation: approximately 1.1 million students whose primary language is not English are distributed throughout the schools of this state and the number keeps growing[2]. While the number of cultures represented in this group is reflected in the fact that there are 59 primary languages represented, it is instructive to know that 75% of these students are Spanish-speaking.[3] According to the latest census figures, there are less than 10,000 Spanish bilingual teachers to serve these students. It is estimated that over the next decade California will need about 20,000 new teachers who have been specially trained to deal with the needs of this culturally and linguistically diverse population.[4]

A number of approaches have been taken, and others are being explored, to develop a corps of teachers which is prepared to deal with the special challenges of conducting educational programs in a culturally diverse environment. For the last five years (1988-1993), the state has produced, on average, only 450 bilingual teachers each year. Taking into account the numbers of these newly-certificated individuals who will leave the teaching profession within the decade ahead and the number of retirements of currently employed professionals with the requisite credentials, current efforts will supply only a very small part of the need. It is clear that it will require the involvement of every sector of the higher education community to address this shortage in the most creative ways.

In preparing for a teaching position in which intercultural and linguistic strategies are vital, a premium must be placed on intercultural and linguistic experience. One approach taken by the CSU's colleges and schools of education have placed a high priority on the development of those students who come from the Spanish-speaking community within California or elsewhere in the United States and on drawing them in significant numbers into the teaching profession. The assumption is that these students have "been there" and work with their instincts, not against them, in dealing with the intercultural problems facing them in the classroom situation. Despite the best efforts of the CSU system, however, the number of new teachers from this source remains

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[1]The process of development detailed in this report was accomplished only with the continuous involvement and input of Dr. Pamela Ross and Dr. Natalie Kuhlman, San Diego State University; Dr. Rene Merino, California State University, Sacramento ; Dr. Berta Gonzalez, California State University, Fresno; and Dr. John Attinasi, California State University, Long Beach

[2]Language Census Report, California Department of Education, Spring, 1993.

[3]Enriquez, S. "Faculty Can't Fill Bilingual Needs of State," Los Angeles Times, 17 October, 1990.

[4]New York TImes News Service, "Bilingual teacher shortage critical," Daily News, 15 December, 1988; Language Census Report, op. cit.

small. In addition, while these teachers bring valuable language/cultural skills to the classrooms, they may not, themselves, have been through a process of intercultural adaptation. Another solution -- employed by some school districts -- is the importation of Spanish-speaking teachers from abroad. While this approach certainly addresses linguistic issues, it overlooks the need for teachers who are steeped in both the home and host cultures in order to assist students to make the desired cultural transitions.

A third approach to this problem creates a programmatic structure for the combination of teacher education and international programming which utilizes a previously untapped resource -- The CSU International Programs (IP). This proposed structure offers a unique approach to supplement and enrich contemporary bilingual/bicultural teacher education in California. The basic elements of this program are:

1. Intensive study of the Spanish language and immersion in a Spanish-speaking milieu;

2. An extended living experience in the Mexican culture.

3. A specific curriculum and program supporting the learning needs of CSU students in their post-baccalaureate, credential year which combines instruction in California, instruction in Mexico, and student teaching in both Californian and Mexican schools;

4. An alternate curriculum supporting the professional development needs of credentialed teachers who need to develop linguistic and intercultural skills leading to an advanced degree and/or credential.

This program is certainly not offered as the solution to the massive shortage of qualified bilingual-crosscultural teachers plaguing this state. While the total number of students who could participate in this particular option would not be large in absolute terms, the expectation is that teachers whose preparation had included this kind of intensive linguistic training, cultural knowledge and personal intercultural adaptation, would constitute a cadré able to offer special knowledge and assistance to their respective school districts and colleagues.

The concept of incorporating international educational experience into the preparation of teachers by the CSU was first conceived by the faculty and staff of the College of Education at San Diego State University (SDSU). The SDSU College of Education operates one of the CSU system's largest bilingual-crosscultural credential programs. The SDSU education faculty have been particularly sensitive to the need to increase the numbers and quality of bilingual-crosscultural teachers as well as the need to increase intercultural awareness among teacher candidates. The SDSU College of Education was brought into contact with the IP staff in early 1989 and a protracted dialogue ensued involving both the teacher education and international education communities in California and Mexico.

After a series of discussions between faculty and administrators within the SDSU College of Education and the Director of International Programs, a joint visit to Mexico City was conducted by the Director and a representative of the SDSU College of Education in April, 1990. This visit included an orientation to UIA, a meeting with the Rector, and detailed discussions with the UIA education faculty. The result of this visit was a strongly favorable report to the IP faculty advisory body, the Academic Council on International Programs (ACIP). The ACIP gave its approval to the program concept and continues to monitor the program in the development process.

The program was conceived with three related objectives in mind: To provide a new option for the award of the Multiple Subject Teaching Credential with a Bilingual, Crosscultural, Language and Academic Development (BCLAD) emphasis; to provide an international venue for the pursuit of master's degree programs in education with a comparative and international

emphasis; and to provide for the professional development of teachers who already possessed teaching credentials, but who lack the preparation in bilingual-crosscultural education needed in today's California schools. All three options are possible within the general structure of the Bilingual Credential Program in Mexico.

The primary focus of the program is on the training of new credential students. This central aspect of the program provides an in-depth professional education experience for a group of students who have made the commitment to pursue a teaching career. To accomplish this objective, the the involvement of the following organizations has been and will continue to be essential:

- The CSU International Programs;
- Representative CSU Schools and Colleges of Education (During the pilot phase of the proposed program these include Fresno, Long Beach, Sacramento, and San Diego);
- The Universidad Iberoamericana (UIA)
  - The Dirección de Programas para Estudiantes Extranjéros (DPEE);
  - The Division de Ciéncias del Hombre (DIVCHO);
  - The Centro de Didáctica (CDID);
- The Escuela Normal Superior de México
- The Secretaria de Educación Pública de México (SEP)

Program Development and Administration

Combining an academic and field experience year abroad with academic and field experiences in California in a complex field like teacher credentialing is a complicated matter. To achieve that combination, a radical departure from past practice is required in every facet of program development and administration.

The first element of that departure is that the program must be developed cooperatively among systemwide and campus programs with differing interests and perspectives. While a few CSU campuses have conducted small experiments in taking credential students abroad -- usually for a short summer tour -- these experiments have been conducted at the margins of the curriculum development process within individual schools and colleges of education. They had not been developed as cooperative endeavors between the schools and colleges. The Bilingual Credential Program in Mexico requires a substantial degree of coordination to realize its potential as a systemwide endeavor. To achieve this coordination, the CSU Director of International Programs formed an informal advisory group, the International Teacher Education Council (ITEC).

ITEC includes the Director and representatives appointed by the Deans of Education at San Diego State University; CSU, Sacramento; CSU, Fresno; and CSU, Long Beach -- specialists in bilingual-crosscultural teacher education. The ITEC's task was to form the first (pilot) iteration of the Bilingual Credential Program in Mexico. This has involved ongoing coordination to develop a coherent curriculum, resolve both internal programmatic differences and address external requirements. Assisting ITEC are the current CSU Resident Director for the Mexico program, the Resident Director appointee for 1994-95 and 1995-96, and the UIA.representative.

In addition to their organizational duties, the ITEC faculty members are the main contacts on their respective campuses for students interested in receiving information and advisement on participating in the Bilingual Credential Program in Mexico.

Organizing Principles

Under the auspices of ITEC, a number of meetings have been held, including a tour of the participating campuses by a representative of the UIA education faculty. Issues relating to curricular structure, admission standards, and logistics were addressed. During the course of these meetings that it became clear that no minor adaptations to existing credential program structures could achieve the necessary coherence and continuity in the program, nor could minor adaptations provide the fullest benefits to students and faculty alike. The ITEC group concluded that:

- The program will operate as a new and independent option for the award of the BCLAD credential with its own separate structure. It cannot borrow from existing course structures, but can employ existing curricular concepts;
- The program will be conducted in California and in Mexico as experience in both venues is critical in the development of new teachers able to function in California's multicultural and multilingual schools;
- Schools and colleges of education in the CSU will retain their independent status as credential awarding institutions. No new credential authority will be sought by the consortium of campuses or by the CSU system; rather, the program will be submitted as an addendum to the credential program approval submissions of those CSU campuses participating in the program;
- The standards for admission, with a few exceptions, will be those already established by the campuses individually. The campuses will not be required to rewrite their admission standards to accommodate the common curriculum of the Bilingual Credential Program in Mexico;
- The ITEC group will provide a combined faculty for the California portion of the program. That portion of the program conducted in Mexico will be handled exclusively by Mexican faculty. Collegial cooperation and respect between the two affiliated faculties will be the hallmark of the program;
- The San Diego State University model, with some modifications, will be the basis for the development of the Bilingual Credential Program in Mexico curriculum structure;
- The ITEC group will conduct a self study of the new program during its first and second years of operation as a basis for mid-course improvements and as a basis for eventual external reviews;
- Operation of the California portion of the program during its initial two years will take place at San Diego State University. The group will consider moving the venue of this portion of the instruction after the second year to another campus in the CSU system, if any are willing and if it is deemed desirable;
- The California element of the program will be presented as a special session program under the auspices of the Extension Division at San Diego State University. The Mexico portion of the program will be operated as a regular academic year CSU international program;

- In the development of the program, special emphasis will be given to developing language and communication skills directly related to the bilingual teaching environment;

- On-site supervision of the credential candidates by a CSU faculty member with competence and experience in clinical supervision will be essential -- especially during the period of the student teaching practicum;

- The California portion of the program will have a strong emphasis on state frameworks (e.g. math, language arts) and CLAD (English language development) competency, including extended student teaching in a CLAD classroom.

Based on these central principles and concepts, the ITEC group developed a specific course structure for the program. This structure features the division of the program into four segments during its pilot iteration in 1994-95:

Segment 1 Opening Session in California (Summer 1 Part l)
Segment 2 Preparatory Language Program in Mexico (Summer 1 Part 2)
Segment 3 Fall and spring term sessions in Mexico
Segment 4 Final Session in California)Summer 2)

While segmented for descriptive purposes, the program is presented as a single block of instruction with no optional courses or electives. The students must complete all four segments in order to qualify for the credential as the work is structured independently of that at the home campus and partial credit would be difficult or impossible to award. This is true because some subjects are offered in two parts in segments 1 and 4 in California, while others are offered in two parts in the California segments and the Mexico academic year segment.

Admissions and Student Services

The admissions process for a bilingual-crosscultural credential program is necessarily a combination of weighting objective standards and making judgments about a students readiness to assume the special challenges of the course of study and the profession of teaching. This process becomes additionally difficult when considering the admission of students into an intensive academic and personal experience involving study abroad.

The basic principle of admissions standards for the Bilingual Credential Program in Mexico is that the CSU schools and colleges of education are best equipped to make this judgment and that they should be able to continue to apply those standards which they normally apply to applicants to their respective programs. Accordingly, the following standards were adopted by ITEC:

- Admission to the BCLAD credential program at a cooperating CSU campus, including meeting applicable campus prerequisites;

- Favorable recommendation of the teacher education faculty at a cooperating CSU campus based on evidence of strong academic skills, of commitment to the teaching profession, and dedication to the professional and international objectives of the Bilingual Credential Program in Mexico;

- Satisfactory achievement on a standard language examination in Spanish to demonstrate readiness for intensive language study at the intermediate/advanced level in Mexico. [A standard examination will be adopted by ITEC to meet this requirement.]

The Bilingual Credential Program in Mexico provides each participating student with a four-tiered information and support system in accordance with BCLAD Standards 7 - 11. Printed materials, academic advisement, personal counseling, and special assistance will be available at:

- The student's home campus and School or College of Education;
- The CSU Office of International Programs;
- The host CSU campus (San Diego State University);
- The Overseas Study Center (incorporating the services of a full-time CSU Resident Director, the faculty and staff of the Universidad Iberoamericana, the cooperating faculty and staff of the Escuela Normal Superiór de México, and the cooperating schools in Mexico.

The program provides for the identification and assistance of candidates who need academic, language, professional or personal assistance and retains only those candidates who are suited to enter the teaching profession. Each candidate's competence will be reviewed at designated checkpoints. Candidates will be informed about strengths and weaknesses, and appropriate support provided.

Faculty and Program Evaluation and Development

The Bilingual Credential Program in Mexico will include a comprehensive, ongoing evaluation and development process responsive to the CTC's Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for the BCLAD credential program. As this program is conducted by a consortium of cooperating CSU Schools and Colleges of Education under the leadership of ITEC, this effort will be conducted by the consortium as a single, unified, process which incorporates the participation of all of the cooperating institutions. A single set of evaluation documentation, responsive to the CTC's Standards and available at any of the cooperating CSU Schools and Colleges of Education for review will be produced. Improvements in all components of the program will be based on the results of this program evaluation, the implications of new knowledge, and the identified needs of of bilingual-bicultural schools and children.

Faculty and course evaluation instruments have been contributed by each of the four Participating Institutions (San Diego, Sacramento, Long Beach and Fresno) and will be utilized in designing the specialized instruments most appropriate to evaluate the Mexico program (according to Standard 5). Program evaluation instruments have been contributed by each of the four Participating Institutions and will be utilized in designing the specialized instruments most appropriate to evaluate the Mexico program (according to Standard 6). Student teacher evaluation will be based on a single instrument developed from student teaching evaluation materials provided by each of the four ITEC campuses. The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with CTC standards by the CSU teaching staff in the California segments and by the resident director for the Mexico segments of the program.

The Bilingual Credential Program will undergo continous review and development during its pilot year (1994-95) under the close supervision of the ITEC group. During the pilot year, only students from the four cooperating campuses will be eligible to participate to keep the group small (@20 - 25 students) and to retain close control over the students' development and experience. This will also assist in simplifying the evaluation process and dealing with any unexpected issues which may arise. During the Spring term of Segment 3, the ITEC group will determine whether the program is ready to expand its base of participation and to what extent. It is the intent of ITEC to expand the program to systemwide status as soon as feasible.